Termite Identification Guide

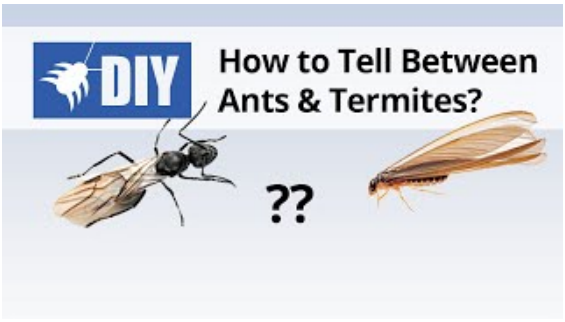
Learn What Termites Look Like

By DoMyOwn staff

OVERVIEW

Making Sure They Are Actually Termites

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ThgAp8QNVs

Before you can begin the termite control process, you will need to make sure you are dealing with termites and not ants. These insects are often confused because they share many traits and termites do kind of look like ants. The following traits can be used to help you tell the difference between termites and ants.

Termites:

- Termites have a thick waist
- Termites have straight antennae
- Termites have shorter legs
- When wings are present, both pairs of wings will be the same length on a termite

vs

Ants:

- Ants have noticeable waists
- Ants have clubbed or bent antennae
- Ants have longer legs
- When wings are present, the front wings will be longer than the back wings on ants

Once you have determined you are indeed dealing with termites you will need to find out if you have subterranean termites or drywood termites because a subterranean termite treatment is quite different than a drywood termite treatment. If you have determined that you actually are in fact dealing with an ant infestation, please visit our Ant Control Guide.

Subterranean termites:

- Subterranean termites have the main portion of their nest underground
- Subterranean termites make mud tubes to access structures
- Subterranean termites usually have large colonies
- Subterranean termites do not kick out feces and debris
- Subterranean termites typically eat along the grain of the wood
- Subterranean termites are known to make "carton" nests in wall voids and in trees. A carton is a nest made from termite fecal matter to maintain the correct moisture level when the termites are unable to return to the actual subterranean nest.

vs

Drywood Termites:

- Drywood Termites do not require soil contact
- Drywood Termites nest inside of the wood they are infesting
- Drywood Termites do not make mud tubes to access wood from underground
- Drywood Termites fly to new locations to infest wood
- Drywood Termites make small "kickout" holes in wood to push feces and debris out of the nest
- Drywood Termites leave small piles of debris outside of the infested wood
- Drywood Termites usually eat across and along the grain of the wood
- Drywood Termites are usually found in coastal regions but they can be transported in infested wood

If you have determined that you actually are in fact dealing with a drywood termite infestation, please visit our Drywood

Termite Control Guide.

Select a topic below to learn how to identify termites, or continue reading below to learn more about them.

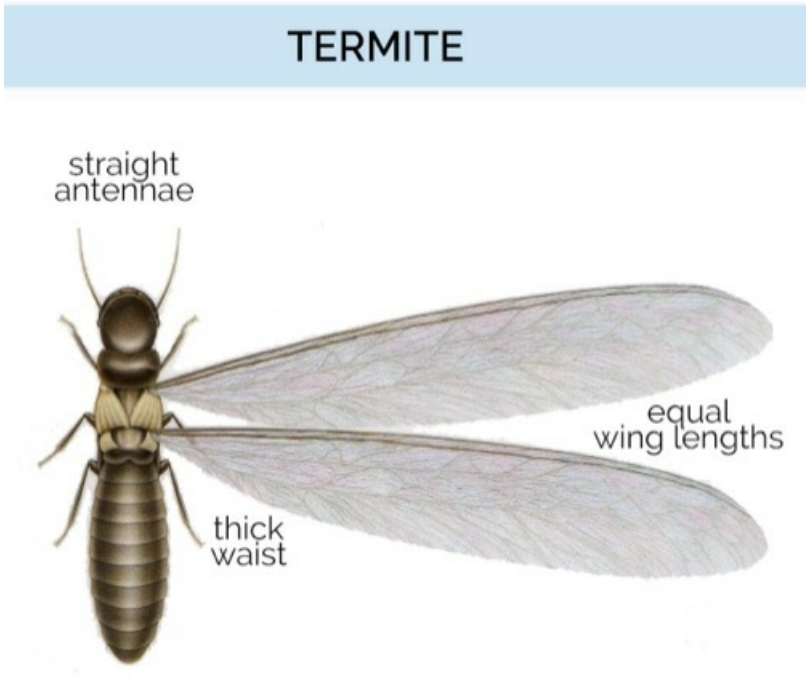
- Termite Size
- Termite Shape
- Termite Color
- Where are termites found in the U.S.?

SIZE
How big are termites?



Termites range in size from 1/4" to 3/8" long. They are generally long and skinny. Termite larvae are tiny--measuring only 1/10" long.

SHAPE



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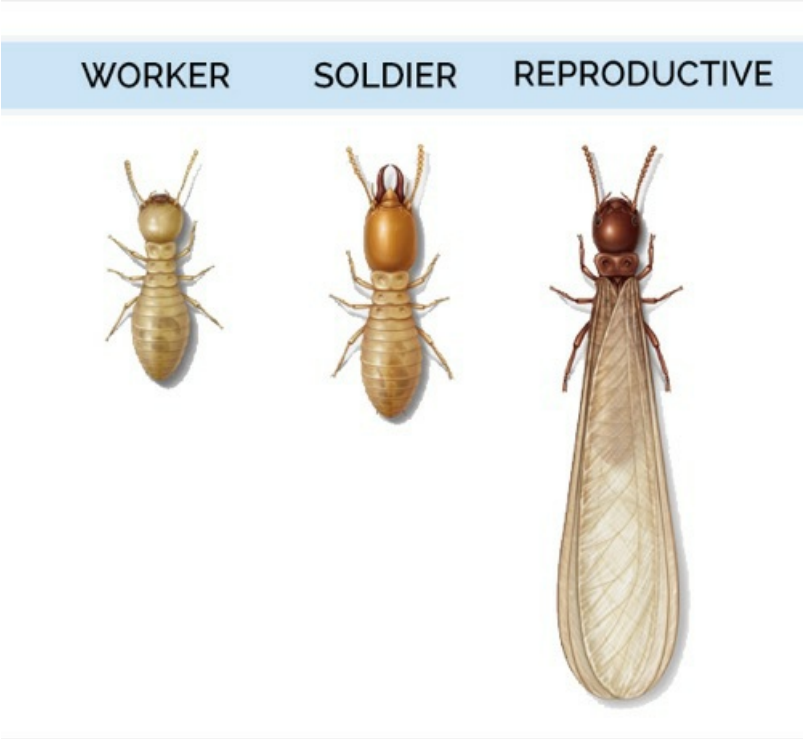
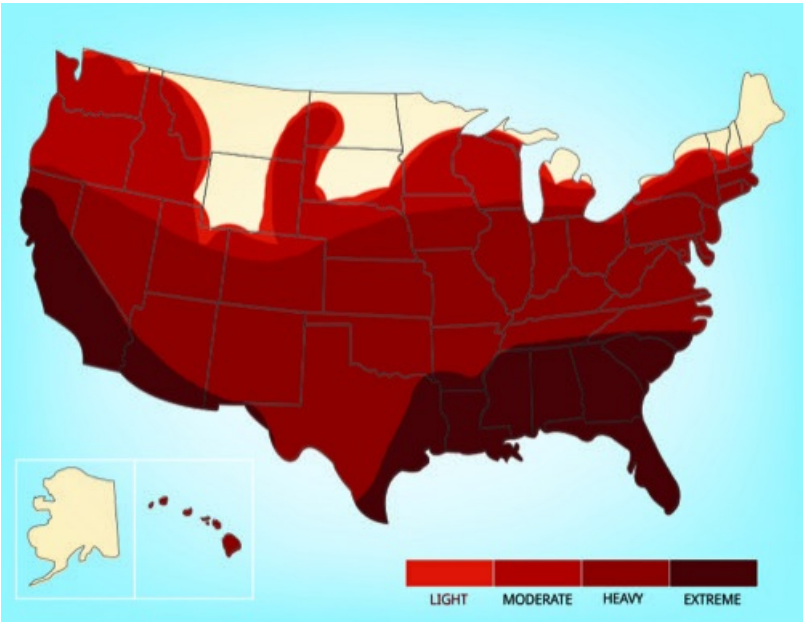
COLOR



What color are termites? Termites will vary in color from cream to black depending on their role within the colony.

RANGE



Subterranean termites are found in most US states while Drywood termites are usually found in the southern coastal areas.

Shop Termite Control Products

See our guides on how to get rid of termites and how to prevent termites around your home.



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